THE DIGITAL PRESENCE OF ACCOMMODATION FACILITIES IN FOZ DO IGUAÇU

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Abstract

This research aimed to explore the digital presence of three types of accommodation in the city of Foz do Iguaçu: hotels, hostels and inns. As an object of study, it was verified in which result page on Google searches such as "hotel in Foz do Iguaçu" appear. The first ten establishments that appear in Google's organic search were selected, disregarding the results of this search that did not correspond to the three types of accommodation searched, such as: advertisements, online reservation services, related services, travel agencies or other means of accommodation. The main methods used were bibliographic and documentary research, treated in a quantitative way, and from these researches we conclude that the digital presence of accommodation facilities in Foz do Iguaçu is still in its embryonic stage, with a lot of room for its growth.

Keywords: digital positioning; digital presence; social networks; hosting facilities; organic search.

Resumo

Essa pesquisa teve por objetivo explorar a presença digital de três tipos de meios de hospedagem na cidade de Foz do Iguaçu: hotéis, hostels e pousadas. Como objeto de estudo foi verificado em qual página de resultado no Google aparecem as pesquisas do tipo "hotel em Foz do Iguaçu". Foram selecionados os dez primeiros estabelecimentos que aparecem na busca orgânica do Google desconsiderados desta busca os resultados que não correspondiam aos três tipos de meio

de hospedagem pesquisados, bem como: anúncios, serviços de reserva online, serviços correlatos, agências de turismo ou outros meios de hospedagem. Os principais métodos usados foram a pesquisa bibliográfica e documental tratados de forma quantitativa, sendo que a partir dessas pesquisas concluímos que a presença digital dos meios de hospedagem em Foz do Iguaçu ainda estão em sua fase embrionária havendo muito espaço para o seu crescimento.

Palavras-chave: posicionamento digital; presença digital; redes sociais; meios de hospedagem; busca orgânica.

1. Introduction

The growing increase in digital consumers forces companies to adapt more quickly each day to the digital world. For this, a series of actions is necessary; digital presence is one of the most relevant of these actions, if not the most relevant. According to 2019 data from the Target Group Index, 92% of Brazilians use the Internet as their main source of information before traveling. Complementing this, according to Google itself, 75% of users do not go beyond the first page of Google search results.

This work aimed to research the digital presence of accommodation facilities in Foz do Iguaçu on Google search pages, organically, and to verify which social networks are most present on the websites of the accommodation facilities researched.

The main methods of analysis were used in bibliographic and documentary research, treated quantitatively, using articles on the subject, books, the websites of the accommodation facilities and Google searches.

As a result of the work, the digital presence of the accommodation facilities researched was surveyed and tabulated, as well as the main social networks presented on the studied websites.

2. Theoretical Framework

According to Belmont (2020), positioning within Marketing refers to the strategies by which we demonstrate and achieve value before the consumer, through perceptions, ideas, concepts, feelings and a set of subjective characteristics to create connection and identification with the consumer. When we talk about Digital Positioning, we must consider that it is the same as for Traditional and Digital Marketing; what changes are the tools and the potential reach, which is much greater. The digital medium makes it possible to mass-disseminate niche campaigns for specific audiences, being present on various devices, media and previously chosen locations, establishing an affective relationship between consumer and brand.

Still according to Belmont (2020), digital presence is defined by the contact points where brands, companies and people are present in the digital world: blogs, websites, social networks and emails are ways to imprint a relevant digital presence before consumers.

Much is said about companies and brands needing to be present on social networks. We can divide social networks into five distinct types: relationship networks (Facebook), entertainment (YouTube), professional (LinkedIn), niche (TripAdvisor) and communication (WhatsApp).

3. Methods

Considering the growing increase in digital searches and travel contacts, the digital presence of accommodation facilities is no longer optional, but absolutely necessary. We considered the hypothesis that the digital presence of accommodation facilities in Foz do Iguaçu is not expressive. To verify this hypothesis, we chose three types of accommodation — hotels, hostels and inns — as we understand them to be the most common and accessible to the vast majority of travelers.

The main objective of this work was to research a sample of accommodation facilities in Foz do Iguaçu and discover how they position themselves digitally. To this end, we performed the following searches on Google: "hotel em Foz do Iguaçu"; "pousada em Foz do Iguaçu";

"hostel em Foz do Iguaçu". We selected the first ten results of the respective accommodation types and subsequently conducted a survey to discover which of the main social networks the surveyed facilities are present on: Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, WhatsApp.

To arrive at the research results and demonstrate the results achieved, we conducted documentary and bibliographic research and tabulated the results, presenting graphs quantitatively.

3.1 Results regarding Google organic search

The first objective was to discover how accommodation facilities in Foz do Iguaçu are positioned digitally. From the searches made on Google, we reached the following results:

Hotels: Ten hotels were located in Google searches, of which 10% appear on the first page of Google results, 50% on the second page, and the other 40% on the third page.

Hostels: Seven hostels were located in Google searches, across the first fourteen search pages on Google, of which 14.29% appear on the first page of Google results, 28.57% on the second page, none on the third page, and 57.14% on the fourth page onwards.

Inns: Nine inns were located in Google searches, of which 22.22% appear on the first page of Google results, 66.67% on the second page, none on the third page, and 11.11% on the fourth page onwards.

Of the three types of accommodation researched, hotels present the best digital presence, with ten representatives in the first three pages of Google results. Inns are represented by nine results, eight of them in the first two pages and one further away. Hostels have one representative on the first page and six more dispersed across fourteen result pages, failing to reach ten results in Google's search results.

Considering that a Google search results page presents approximately ten organic, non-sponsored results per page, and that according to Google itself 75% of people do not go beyond

the first page of Google in their searches, we can understand that the accommodation facilities analyzed fail to position themselves digitally in an expressive way in organic Google searches.

3.2 Regarding Social Networks

After accessing the websites of the accommodation facilities, we verified which of them indicated their social networks on their own websites. Specific searches on social networks were not carried out; only those indicated on each facility's website were considered as social network presence. We can see that the social networks most present on the surveyed websites are Facebook, a relationship network, and WhatsApp, a communication network.

Hotels: On the pages of the ten hotels, 100% presence on Facebook was found, 30% on LinkedIn, 90% on Instagram and 80% on WhatsApp.

Hostels: On the pages of the seven hostels, 100% presence on Facebook was found, 0% on LinkedIn, 85.71% on Instagram and 85.71% on WhatsApp.

Inns: On the pages of the nine inns, 66.67% presence on Facebook was found, 0% on LinkedIn, 44.44% on Instagram and 88.89% on WhatsApp.

4. Conclusions

This work arose from the need to have a greater understanding of the digital presence of accommodation facilities in Foz do Iguaçu. Through the research conducted, we achieved the objective of analyzing the digital presence of accommodation facilities in Foz do Iguaçu, and also achieved the secondary objective, carrying out a survey of the social networks indicated on the websites of the researched facilities.

Through the applied research, we were able to confirm our hypothesis that the positioning of accommodation facilities in the city of Foz do Iguaçu is still not representative. Presence in search result pages is dispersed, mostly dominated by tourism agencies, accommodation resellers, packages, tours and mainly online booking companies (OTAs). We also found that the

most relevant and present social networks for the surveyed facilities are Facebook, a relationship network, and WhatsApp, a communication network.

Given these results and the lack of presence of accommodation facilities before their competitors, accommodation facilities cannot and should not remain indifferent to this competition, which ends up retaining a good part of gross revenue. The growing increase in digital searches and travel contacts brings new challenges to the hotel sector; the digital presence of accommodation facilities is no longer optional, but absolutely necessary.

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